The magic box is also the Hottentot's poison supply. Whereas 757
billygoat fat possesses only healing properties, the other ingredients are 755
said to have a poisonous effect when secretly mixed with the enemy's tobacco or smeared on the bit of his pipe.

The box is also a soothsaying apparatus. A thread is placed in the 757
fat. The end which sticks out of the closed box is lighted and held to- 755
wards the wind. The direction of the smoke is followed by the Hottentot, if he does not know where he should look for a runaway cow or a lost companion. If he wants to catch up with a companion on the way to a meagre water hole so that he can water his oxen first, he ties a knot in the thread and lights it. Just as the glimmering fire goes out and is stopped, so his companion is supposed to be stopped until caught up with. Whoever has the reputation of controlling events in this way, is usually highly regarded as a doctor. Besides conscious deceit, medi- 755
cinal magic has many procedures which are based on faith and perhaps work by suggestion. Pains in the head and limbs are charmed away by two rather large glass beads, !gai-/!ai/mus, which serve only this purpose. A thread is tied firmly around the head and the two beads are placed close together in the middle of the forehead. If in the course of hours they slip far apart, then the pain has to be gone.

[227] A Hottentot woman ties a loin chain, //ni$^{n}$i-b, made of round little pieces of ostrich eggshells, around her own or her child's hips for pains in the abdomen.

The so-called "fright illness" of children which supposedly manifests itself by the child fainting for no particular reason, gets its name !kʰaa/os from the eland antelope, whose skin is highly prized as a cure for this illness. The skin is cut into small octagonal pieces and into strips 1/2 centimeter wide, dried, and made supple with eland fat. The cure consists in the following: a little piece of the skin, scarcely the size of a lentil, is turned to ash, pulverized with the fingernail, mixed into a swallow of milk, and fed to the child. The strap is bound around the child's breast as the illustration shows. When it falls off of its own accord several days later, the cure is considered successfully concluded. In the case that I knew about the magician received a goat in payment. [Picture. Fastening on the strips of the eland skin. In the neck region: Enlargement of the knot.]

Inadequate and irregular food, privations of all kinds, uncleanliness, 164
premature sexual intercourse and excessive use of alcohol and tobacco are the principal destructive forces from which the Hottentot's body suffers. Tuberculosis (//noba-b) and venereal disease are extensive.
Syphilis claims many victims.

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Hottentots, "because he brought such a bad message, and therefore we dislike to eat his flesh."[1]

Death itself is attributed in many cases to the influence of the evil being *//Gaunab*, "whose greatest aim is to harm people and to destroy them," or to the */hai /nun*, ghosts of the dead, who chase living people or come to them in dreams and try to drag them off to the grave. The */gei aops* or magicians can also use their power for evil, and thus cause people to sicken and die.[2] The malice of ghosts or evil magicians seems in fact to be by far the most common cause of death in Hottentot eyes. Mrs. Hoernlé even says definitely that "the Naman considered that all sickness was caused either by *//Gaunab*, or the */Hai /Nun*, or by persons somehow in contact with them, the witchcraft practitioners."[3] Sometimes, however, death will also follow automatically on the violation of certain ritual observances or avoidances, and in such cases is apparently not linked up in any way with supernatural beings or their human agents. Cold water, for example, must be carefully avoided by a menstruating woman or anybody else in the condition of */nun*. Commenting upon this regulation, Mrs. Hoernlé says: "I have had many instances which were given to me of people who actually have died because they were obliged to touch water when they should not have done so, and their absolute belief in the danger is quite sufficient to cause death in many instances."[4]

It is obvious from these beliefs that the Hottentots are far from considering natural causes alone to be sufficient explanation for death. At the same time one gets the impression from the literature generally that such causes are not entirely disregarded, as for example, in the case of wounds, burns, falls, starvation, etc., which are known to cause death or disablement in a natural way. But no attempt appears to have been made to investigate in any detail how far and in what circumstances purely natural causes in themselves may be admitted as sufficient explanation for death.

Dead people are as a rule disposed of by burial. The only other mode of disposal is exposure, which takes place only in a few special cases. Among the Cape Hottentots, for example, one of twins

[1] Native texts of the myth are published in Meinhof, *Lehrbuch der Nama-Sprache*, 170–1 and Schultze, *Nama-land und Kalahari*, 448–9; translated versions in Wikar, "Beriqt aan van Plettenberg," 118–19; Bleek, *Report on the Fan in S. Africa*, 69–73; Kleinschmidt, in Meinke, "Die ältesten Reisenberichte über D.S.W.A.," 1915, p. 253.

[2] Hahn, *Tsuni-//Goam*, 85–6; Hoernlé, "Social Value of Water among the Namas," 517–21 *passim*.

[3] Op. cit., 520–1; cf. Hahn, op. cit., 85.

[4] "South-West Africa," 27.

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might be buried alive, or else placed in some exposed spot or in bushes to be destroyed by the elements or by wild animals.[1] Similarly, according to Hahn, "a man who is killed as a criminal, or who is slain according to the rules of the vendetta, or a slave killed by the master, or enemies killed in the battle—all are left to the animals of the desert to be feasted upon, so that they will be entirely annihilated." Such people who are devoured by vultures or hyenas are called *//gauna //oro-khoin*, i.e. people who died the *//gauna* death.[2]

There existed among the Hottentots also the custom, already noted among the Bushmen, of abandoning elderly people to their fate. Kolb describes it rather more fully than do other writers. When old people become helpless or decrepit, he says, their eldest son or nearest relation applies to the people of the kraal for permission, never refused, to relieve himself of the burden and to deliver the suffering old person from the miserable condition to which he is reduced. The son kills an ox or a few sheep to regale the men of the kraal, who take leave of their old neighbour. Then, on the appointed day, the old man or woman is placed on a riding ox and, accompanied by an escort, is conducted to a small hut specially built for the purpose at some distance from the kraal. Here he is left alone, with a small quantity of provisions placed by his side, to die ultimately of starvation or to be devoured by wild beasts.[3]

This account may not be quite accurate in all its details. But there is ample evidence that the exposure of old people in this way was common and widespread among all the Hottentots.[4] Hahn, inquiring into the reason for the practice, was told by the Naman that it was sometimes done by very poor people who had not enough food to support their aged parents. "But sometimes," he adds, "even if there was food enough, and if people, especially women, who had cattle and milk-cows of their own, gave suspicion that they were under the influence of *//Gaunab*, and did secretly mischief by practising witchcraft, they were left to die from starvation. The people, awe-stricken, were almost compelled to fly from them."[5]

Where burial takes place, it is accompanied by a series of rites.

[1] Cf. above, p. 266.
[2] Op. cit., 86.
[3] *Verzeichniss der Cocoa Hottentotten*, 133.
[4] Grevenbroek, "Uit den Ouden Tijd," 24; Sparrman, *Voyage to the Cape*, i, 358; Campbell, *Travels in S. Africa*, 428; Albrecht, "Beobachtungen im Gross-Namalande," 2693; Shaw, *Memorials of S. Africa*, 40–1; Moffat, *Missionary Labours in S. Africa*, 133–6 Fritsch, *Eingeborenen Süd-Afrika's*, 334.
[5] Op. cit., 86; cf. 74.

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755 small animals, such as a species of chameleon, the shrew mouse, bats, and a small bird of the family *Sylviidae*. These ingredients are dried and cut up or ground to powder, and are then mixed with the raw goat's fat which fills the medicine horn and which is thought to absorb the effective principles of the other substances. The goat's fat has curative powers only, and is rubbed into cuts made in the patient's body, but the other ingredients, secretly mixed in tobacco or smeared on the mouthpiece of a pipe, can be used for affecting a person's emotions, as in love magic, or for injuring his health.

791 The principal function of the */gai aob* is to cure people who have been bewitched.[1] He is considered as in some way connected with 755 the */hei /nun*—we are nowhere told how—and therefore has an immunity which ordinary people have not from the sickness caused by the */hei /nun* or by their human agents, the witchcraft practitioners. This immunity he can impart to others, and so cure them of the disease, by inoculating them with his essence, as it were, which is contained in the dirt and perspiration of his body. He scrapes the dirt off as he requires it, and it forms an essential ingredient in all his medicines and cures. The treatment he follows when called in to a patient is nowhere fully described.[2] Generally, it seems, he first extracts from the patient's body, by massaging and sucking, the foreign bodies held to have been secreted there and so to be causing the illness. Then, to complete the cure, he makes cuts in the patient's body, into which he rubs some of the fat from his medicine horn mixed with dirt and perspiration scraped from his own body. Sometimes he gives the patient decoctions made from his medicines, and invariably the patient has to provide him with one or more slaughter animals, certain internal portions of which are necessary ingredients in the medicines, and the meat of which he keeps for himself.

791 As long as the */gai aob* uses his powers in this way for good, he is much respected, and is an important person in the community. 754 But he can also use it for evil, and by resorting to witchcraft make 823 people ill or kill them, instead of curing them. If it is suspected that he himself is causing illness, the community has a sure way of protecting itself from him.[3] Cold water is absolutely fatal to his power, and in ordinary life he never touches it on any account. Should it be decided that he has caused sickness or death among the people,

[1] Hoernlé, loc. cit.; Olpp, *Angra Pequena*, 29; Wikar, op. cit., 122–3; Schultze, loc. cit.
[2] The most serviceable account is given by Nolte, "Krankheiten und Heilmittel der Nama," *Deutz. Kolztg.*, iii (1886), 629–30.
[3] Hoernlé, op. cit., 520–1; cf. *idem*, "South-West Africa," 27.

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the chief will therefore order him to be deprived of all his power. He is taken to the nearest pool of water and ducked completely. His power, residing in his body dirt, oozes away from him into the water, as it were, and he is an ordinary man once more! Mrs. Hoernlé states that she knows of two instances in which this course was adopted.

In the same way, the medicines of the */gai aob* can also be rendered innocuous by immersion in cold water. Mrs. Hoernlé records the case of a girl who had been bewitched and who nearly died as a result. She was finally cured by the medicine which is all powerful against all witchcraft methods. "This is the *//a !naip*, the kidney of a species of jackal, which has a smell so strong and penetrating that it is too much even for any */gei* medicine. When this was given to the girl, she vomited and brought up the little */gei* sticks and leaves which had been doing all the mischief. The mother showed these sticks and leaves to some old men who took them all away and threw them into cold water, so that their power was gone for ever."[1] Here we have another instance of the protective value of water, to which attention has already been drawn.

It is difficult to determine what other regular functions the */gai aob* has apart from the curing, or causing, of disease. Hahn speaks as if the */gai aob* formerly officiated at the boys' puberty ceremony, at the reception of warriors returning home after battle, and at the slaughtering of a cow or sheep "as an offering to the deceased or to the Supreme Being"[2]; but he gives no further details and there is no other statement definitely connecting the */gai aob* with these rites.

Elsewhere Hahn mentions "a class of sorcerers" chiefly occupied in making rain, "who in former times must have been very numerous, but since the introduction of Christianity are only met here and there on the kraals of the heathen tribes."[3] "Having a great practical knowledge of the meteorology of their country," he says, "they pretend to have power over the clouds and to bind them. Thus they sprinkle their urine into a burning fire, being convinced that it soon will rain. They also cut the nails of their fingers, and throw them into the fire for the same purpose. They catch a kind of caprimulgus (*/ga//goab*), and burn the bird to ashes, which are strewn about, in order to produce clouds and ashes. These sorcerers naturally take good care not to display their tricks of witchcraft if there are, according to their own practical experience, no sufficient indications

[1] "Social Value of Water," 321. [2] Op. cit., 23, 24. [3] Ibid., 83.

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791 There is some mention also of prophets or seers, *gèio aogu*, among the Naman. These people, says Hahn,[1] "could tell to new-born children as well as to heroes their fate, and this important institution [887] was in the hands of the greatest and most respected old men of the clan." It is probable that the "old men good at prophesying" referred to by Mrs. Hoernlé in her description of the annual rain ceremony, are these *gèio aogu*, but this is not clearly indicated. Otherwise we have no information at all about the functions of these seers.

789 The wearing of various kinds of amulets, it may finally be noted, 751 is by no means uncommon. Graevenbroeck as far back as 1695 mentions that the Cape Hottentots often carried round their necks small pieces of wood about the thickness of a finger, which they believed would protect them at night from all danger when out in the open veld.[2] And Wikar noted[3] that among the Naman the magicians sold to the people all sorts of little pieces of wood to protect them against harm and disease, as well as against other dangers to men and cattle. These sticks were to be burned or rubbed on the body. He describes one type used in case of danger in war. The fortunate possessor scraped it on his foot and on his body, and then could run so fast that he could not be overtaken!

789 Even at the present time, as we have previously seen, herdsmen and warriors, as well as others, use similar pieces of wood, fangs, beads, pieces of scaly skin, etc., which are believed to ward off all dangers, maintain health or deliver the possessor from evil. As a rule such objects are worn at the breast on a thin leather strap; very often they may be tied on the painful part of the body, and are then simply called "medicine". When circumstances demand it, they prepare [439] these amulets themselves, but, observes Vedder, they have so little confidence in their own art that they would rather purchase them from the OvaMbo, OvaHerero, Bergdama, and especially the Bushmen.[4]

754 The respect for the magical powers of other peoples, indicated in the case both of the amulets and of divination, was also observed 648 by Wikar among the Naman towards the end of the eighteenth century. He says that they feared both the Bergdama and the BeChwana as powerful wizards. "I asked them if they had already had proof of the witchcraft of the BeChwana. They replied that in earlier times their forefathers had stolen cattle from the BeChwana, but while on the way home had been bewitched, so that they became mad, and

[1] Op. cit., 24. [2] Op. cit., 367.
[3] Op. cit., 123. [4] Op. cit., 134.

5: Vedder M-5 (ca. 1910) 1928
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been done away with, the worship has ceased but the moon-light dances are still in vogue and are still regularly got up here and there.

The majority of the Nama have become Christians, taking a pride in being called Christians, more or less. Heathenism has been cast into oblivion to such an extent that the investigator can hardly expect any results from his researches even among the old heathens still left in out of the way places.

## VI. Witchcraft and Superstition.

1. As is the case in all other religions, so also in the Nama religion does the worship go hand in hand with partly stable, partly ever-changing superstitious beliefs and customs. The skilled eye of the investigator will be able to discriminate between the two, and know how to keep these domains of religion and of superstition distinctly apart. In spite of the fact that these two are so closely related in the consciousness of the tribe, that the one always contains the other, yet the characteristic feature that a tribe forgets its religion and exchanges it for another, much more easily than it gives up its superstitions, will not go by unobserved. For this reason it is not to be wondered at that the reports about the hereditary religion of the Nama are very sparse and difficult to understand, whereas the superstitions can easily be investigated and related and that witchcraft is still in force, being indulged in secretly, reservedly, avoiding all publicity in one place or unashamedly and publicly in another, according to circumstances.

2. The Nama belief in immortality is hardly stronger than their fear of ghosts. Everywhere they relate of departed souls of olden as well as modern times, which have reappeared in some form or another.

No wonder that the heathens never laid out graves conjointly, but buried their dead somewhere in a solitary place and secured the grave with heavy stones. This does not only happen because they want to protect the corpse against being damaged by the animals of the desert, but actually also in order to prohibit them from rising up again.

Heiseb, who has already been mentioned, for this reason entreated his subjects to cover him up with "soft stones," when he died, as he had the intention of rising from the grave and would be impeded by "hard stones."

They regard many symptoms on the body of a dying person, or on the bodies of relatives, and above all, strange ways of behaviour among animals, as precursors of death.

3. He who treads on a grave, passes one unmindfully, or points at a grave with his finger has disturbed the rest of the dead and must expect his revenge. When the corpse of an acquaintance or a relative appears to one in a dream, he

843 they frequently massage her. During the last months before the birth the young woman generally goes back to her mother. The older relatives of the mother function as midwives and are by no means inefficient. By rising too soon, however, 846 the mother unfortunately exposes herself to danger and diseases among women are consequently not unusual. The 851 christening lies in the hands of the father. In olden days 551 every child received a Nama name reminiscent of the circum- 843 stances just antecedent or subsequent to the birth, but the 642 Christian Nama have given up this custom, and Biblical and European names are very general lately. The midwife who assists at the birth often gets a present which consists of two goats when a boy is born; when a girl is born, this is reduced by half.

857 5. It is held that the adolescent girl will very soon be a 871 help to her mother, and boys have to look after the herds from their very early youth. In this matter the school has to fight many a fight with the parents, who do not realise that, in order to make progress, the child has to attend classes regularly. The mother always regards it as more proper to employ the girl at home, and when a goat is lost, it is much more important to send the boy into the pastures to look for it than that he should attend school. But a change has taken place in this respect and the Nama now learn to understand that a regular attendance at class will be of importance to the child in later years.

841 6. When at the age of 12-14 years the first menstruation sets in with adolescent girls, the whole family celebrates the occasion. In a corner of the hut which is separated from the rest of the room by means of a curtain, the girl is isolated and adorned with all sorts of ornaments by the feminine members of the family. A festival day is appointed, and in families where old customs are still adhered to the girl is given fresh cows-milk to drink. The milk must come from a cow that has its first calf. If this cow does not die during the days of the menstruation or if she does not get ill, the girl is harmless. But if the cow should die it is proof that [784] this girl possesses special powers, and she dare not drink milk from the herd again during the days of menstruation lest she imperil the herd.

[754] Her menstrual blood is looked upon as effective poison which, when dry, they rub from the clothes and mix with [757] hated people's food in order to kill them. The blood of the harmless girl on the other hand is used as medicine for sexual diseases amongst men.

593 7. The brothers and sisters call one another by their names. 576 The parents are also accustomed to calling their children by their names unless they prefer to call the little sucklings "Little Father" or "Little Mother." But children are not allowed to call their parents or their parents' elderly relatives

6: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913)1923
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751 823 182 territory by contact with its waters. A similar ceremony takes place when a Nama goes visiting relatives in another tribe. The head of the kraal visited must take wet clay and black from the pot, and put a broad stripe on the visitor's forehead, so that he may be able to "eat nicely and drink nicely," as my informant put it. Here it would seem the stranger is given the protection of the society into which he has entered, and is free from danger that might otherwise beset him in a strange place. The preceding example shows perhaps what the danger is, namely, the hostile /Hei /Nûn, and this example makes a little clearer the nature of the protection sought when one is visiting an old locality of the tribe. One identifies oneself with the place and its spirits, and so gets protection and support instead of hostility.

751 The use of soot black from the pots is also very interesting, but I do not want to go into many details here. It is always used as a sign that one is being admitted to the full life of the society, and so to its protection. Thus, one must put a black mark on a baby when it visits one's werft for the first time, otherwise it will be ill, and after a period of isolation from the full life of the tribe this black mark is always put on the forehead at the ceremonial meal which signalises the reintroduction to full social life.

754 756 823 The next example is a little different. In the old days, there were among the Naman !Gèi Aogu, witch doctors, men who could cure people who had been bewitched, but who might also themselves resort to bewitching, and so make people ill or kill them. I have never myself met with a real !Gèi aop unfortunately, and it is very hard to get from the natives any account of their training or method of becoming !Gèi Aogu. The missionaries have exerted all their influence to prohibit the practices of the witch doctor, and it is probably hard to find a Nama to-day who really knows all the secrets of the profession. An old man of the Bondelzwart tribe told me that a child born with a caul might become a clever !Gèi aop, if he were given the caul to eat as a child. Others, however, have told me such a child became a gebo aop, a seer. In any case, it is certain that the !Gèi aop was considered in some way connected with the /Hei /Nûn, and therefore had an immunity which others had not. He could impart his immunity to others and so cure them of disease by inoculating them with his essence, as it were, which was contained in his body dirt and perspiration, and which he could scrape off as he needed it. The !Gèi Aop was, therefore, a person of considerable importance in a community, and was much respected so long as he used his power for good, but he might also use it for evil, causing sickness instead of curing it. Now, the Naman considered that all sickness was caused either by //Gãunb.* or the /Hei /Nûn, or by persons somehow in contact with them, the witchcraft practitioners, and one of the

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* See Theophilus Hahn, *Tsuni-//Goam*, p. 87, and Peter Kolben, *Caput Bonæ Spei Hodiernum*, first German edition, 1719, p. 438.

6: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913)1923
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ordinary duties of !Gèi Aop was to discover the source of the sickness. If, however, it was thought that he himself was causing sickness, the community had a sure way of protecting itself from him. For, cold water was absolutely fatal to his power, and in ordinary life he never touched it on any account. Should it be decided that the !Gèi aop has caused sickness or death among the people, the chief will order him to be deprived of all his powers. I have two instances in which this has happened; one among the Berseba people, one among the Zwartboys far to the north. The !Gèi aop is taken to the nearest pool of water, and is ducked completely. His power oozes away from him into the water as it were, and he is as an ordinary man once more. As the !Gèi aop is rendered innocuous, so, too, is his medicine. I was told in Walvis Bay by a mother how her daughter had been !Gèied, and how she nearly died, but how at length she got the medicine which is all powerful against all !Gèi methods. This is the //A !naip, the kidney of a species of jackal, which has a smell so strong and penetrating, that it is too much even for any !Gèi medicine. When this was given to the girl, she vomited and brought up the little !Gèi sticks and leaves which had been doing all the mischief. The mother showed these sticks and leaves to some old men who took them all away and threw them into cold water, so that their power was gone for ever.

Another instance of the same kind is that of certain medicinal roots. When any of the roots which are considered really powerful are dug from the ground, something has to be given in return, otherwise the root will not act, and similarly when it is passed from person to person, a present must also be given. When taking the root one addresses it thus: "A, //na ta gye nesi go khau, o ta gye hui te damats, gara i o, !kéi //gams !na ni ǂo ǂgǎ tsi." (Ah, there I have dug this, and if you don't help me, harming me rather, I shall throw you into cold water.)

All the foregoing instances illustrate the protective power of water. Things or persons which might harm members of the society are rendered harmless by immersion in cold water, or by the application of cold water to them, or, as in revisiting an old place of habitation, or on returning from the grave, one can protect oneself from harm by applying wet clay or water to oneself.

Before turning to the other set of examples in which water is considered dangerous, I should like to mention one or two customs from the literature. I could not find any evidence that these customs are kept up now by the tribes I have come in contact with, but they fit in very well with what I have been saying.

Peter Kolben* tells us that the Hottentots before crossing a river go down to the edge, splash themselves with water, and smear their foreheads with sand or clay.

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* *Caput Bonae Spei Hodiernum*, first German edition, 2nd part, Vth Letter, p. 419.

7: Laidler D-5 (ca. 1925) 1928
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argument, be a good "blood giver." This is an instance of the modern application of ancient sympathetic method.

The further information here gathered together, represents the work of four years' questioning, checking, and corroborating statements made by many herbalists, not a few of whom were also practitioners of witchcraft, that is, practitioners of major qualifications. One took four bottles of water mixed with earth and the ground remains of a certain little red-headed hornet that builds in houses and huts. Before rising each morning he drank a mouthful of the suspension. On the fifth day of this treatment; "there lay the sick people—and there lay the medicines. And now passed the new power between the shoulders." Here, perhaps, is some small relic of the initiation of a man into the cult of P/gai* aup.

Only occasionally is there a little resemblance between the herbs used by the Native and those of the modern occidental pharmacopoeia. Yet there is a sufficient similarity between them to cause the scoffer to cease his scoffing, and realise that here, after all, lies the root and origin of modern medicine—modern scientific medicine which owes at least one of its drugs to this ancient Hottentot herbal, namely, Buchu. The bitter roots are similar in appearance on cross section, colour of infusion, taste, and action to the Radix Calumbae of modern pharmacy. But, with this one exception, there is no commercial future for any other item. The quantity of most of the herbs and medicinal bushes in the country is but small.

Red substances are used in anaemias and weaknesses, and repeated doses are given during fevers. They are used, several authorities state, because they are red and the blood is red, and therefore they strengthen the blood, and, of course, when grown on red ground, their value as drugs is increased enormously. All such red materials when used and finished with must be disposed of carefully, because goods-stuff must never be thrown away. Rooi wortle, for weaknesses, Baboon's ear, the Kalkoen bloom, Rooi rainkie, are examples, and in each the reason for use is their colour, and, should they grow in red ground, they must be good. The same principle is expressed in the use of the dark lichen which grows on almost all granite outcrops in Namaqualand, which is used in decoction as a mouth-wash for teething.

Barend makes young people's medicine as the moon grows during the first days of the month, and never prepares any when the moon is on the wane. Yet he always examines cut sections of roots to see if they come from poor ground. He evidently works on a combination of "scientific" and "sympathetic" lines. The same medicine prepared in a different manner may have a different action. Thus, if black root be cut in an upward

*For ease in printing and reading I have denoted the clicks thus:—D/ the dental; P/ the palatal; C/ the cerebral; L/ the lateral and X/ the guttural.

7: Laidler D-5 (ca. 1925) 1928
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direction it will act as an emetic; should it be cut downwards it is transformed into a purgative. The Fleer-boom, also, is used in this manner. Purgatives have a strange fascination for the Native, and for pains in the stomach or "fevers" they have been used to "work them out," that is, a tangible removal must always, they argue, be productive of good, for they firmly believe that whatever they suffer is caused by a tangible something.

Rule of thumb methods prevailed in treatment, and the lore was handed down from father to son. In the beginning, man noticed that when he awakened in the morning he felt at his best; worked, or hunted better than later in the day; slackened and grew tired as the sun sank beneath the western horizon. Then he jumped to the conclusion that the rising of the sun was responsible for well-being, growth, and strength; and that the falling, setting sun was responsible for tiredness, failing strength and death. Therefore, the old tooth was thrown towards the rising sun, but a P/gai aup or witch doctor would throw it towards the setting sun to produce an evil effect. A fright was something tangible, and Nama women still by palpation diagnose the presence of a lump, a crystallised fright that has settled in the stomach. They state too, that the woman's "life place" resides on the right side, and that when she is sickly it moves about.

From the details of this herbal lore it appears that the chief medical ailments treated by the Hottentots were pains in the stomach and fevers, classed together as "fires," and distinguished only by locality, flatulence as an entity, diarrhoea, and among the accidental injuries, burns. Several specific complaints had specific treatment. Kolben described the treatment of headache by shaving the head with a sharp knife, leaving furrows between the mounds of hair. If the cause was supposed to be a "wind in the head," then massage was applied to the nape of the neck; and snuff of "dooba," which smells of garlic (asafoetida) was used. A case occurred during 1923 in Namaqualand of scarification of the temples as treatment for madness. Old writers mention this as the means whereby pains were let out. Infantile convulsions must have given the old women much work. A favourite prescription for this complaint was, and still is, Stink kruit leaves, the dried kidney of the D/aie jackal, and the sea bean, whatever that may be. Of these a powder is made which is worked into a linen band (in old days, a strip of hide) and fastened round the neck of the small patient. Small doses are then given internally mixed with mother's milk. The treatment is continued for one moon.

Alternating periods of famine and feast upset many stomachs. When excess was recognised to be the cause of his discomfort, the Hottentot took the juice of aloes in warm broth. The leaves to-day are dried and chopped up as required.

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694)1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot



000 Divitiae Afris nostris palmariae, arma, et pecus sunt. Fixas sedes nullas habeat, migrare per arva illis mos, atque errantes circumportare penates, bubis citatis velocissimisque dorso quaecunque onera, etiam homines et clitellas portantibus, et quo prata et pascua gregem, buceraque secla vocant, huc cum mapalibus suis sparsi, vagantesque circumcelliones ire, pecusque quoad contenebrascit pascere, illudque septis (ut supra dixi) nocte continere, alternantes brachia pedesque plausu, et ducere choros lasciviore corporis motu imminente luna, intempestâ concubiaque nocte assolent.

Morbo et aetate confectum, solum mutantes in tuguriolo probè clauso, instructum commeatu, aquâ et igne, pro silicern(i)o, singulari immanitate depositum, omnique auxilio destitutum, Barbarorum barbarissimi nobis vicini, nullo sexus aut consanguinitatis respectu, a lege alimentaria alienissimi derelinquunt.

Feminae ex incurvatis arcuatisque et in terram depactis tigillis crebrisque axiculis, transversè sibi invicem vimine connexis, orbiculatum convexum, testudineumque, et circiter quinque pedes altum, ejusque diametro duodenos non excedente, tuguriolum cum bicubitali ostiolo orienti obverso aedificant, illudque craticulis seu mattis, storeisve ex junco hibisco scirpove aff[r]abrè textis, quandoque etiam pellibus, contra caeli inclementiam aestuantesque ventos contegunt, et hoc tectum totam familiam, tenerosque agnellos, adasias cum vitulis excipit, in cujus centro omnibus fovendis cibisque praeparandis foculus perennis lucet, ibique ut plurimum libero corde confabulantur, tempusque cacchinis et cavillationibus Abarides, concordiâ conjunctissimi terunt: En lepidum gynaeceum!

Hae etiam figlina sua vasa dextrè satis conflant, ex fusili argillâ, quam effossam domum deportant, eamque in partes jugiandium magnitudine sectam, pellique inspersam, aspersamque subinde quantulacunque aquiculâ, ne nimium arescat, in biduum aut triduum insolant, hinc depititiam in cylindros, botellorum instar, ulnae magnitudine singulos, redigunt: primumque in gyros, turbinemque inflectunt

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888 754 [73]) This custom of abandoning elderly people to their fate was still being practised by the Hottentots in the middle of last century (see authorities quoted by Schapera, op. cit., 359). Hahn, inquiring into the reason for the practice, was told by the Naman that it was sometimes done by very poor people who had not

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot



The chief riches of the natives in our parts are arms and cattle. They have no fixed abodes, but move from place to place carrying their homes with them on their wanderings. Their oxen, travelling at a very rapid pace, carry all their burdens, even men and pack-saddles, on their backs. Where meadows and pastures invite the flocks and herds, there they scatter themselves with their little huts, living the life of wandering friars. Till even shadows fall they pasture their flocks; at night they enclose them, as I said above; then to the clapping of hands and stamping of feet, with wanton gestures they ply the dance beneath the presiding moon far into the stilly hours of night.

When changing their terrain they abandon those enfeebled by sickness or age. The man to be left is shut up in a hut with a supply of provisions, water, and fire to furnish forth his funeral feast, but destitute of every other aid. This singular cruelty is practised by the natives near us, who are the most barbarous of their race. They regard neither sex nor kinship in thus rejecting all obligations to maintain the sick and old.[73])

The women make the huts, and in this wise. Numerous rods and poles are fixed in the earth and bent over in the shape of an arch, forming a hemispherical, convex, tortoise-shell-like frame. The sides are woven across with pliant withies. The hut is about five feet high, the diameter does not exceed twelve feet, and there is a little door three feet high looking to the East. The huts are covered with skilfully woven mats of rush or reed, or sometimes even with skins to afford protection against the inclemency of the sky and the raging winds. This roof covers the whole household, including the newborn lambs and the cows with their calves. In the centre is an ever-glowing hearth to keep all warm and cook the food, and there for the most part the native women pass their time, discharging their hearts in gossip, and laughing and joking, the best of friends and cronies. Picture to yourself the elegant salon!

The women also make earthenware vessels quite skilfully out of moistened clay. They dig up the clay and carry it home, where it is cut up into portions the size of a walnut. These are placed on a skin and sprinkled with a little water from time to time to prevent them getting too dry, and exposed to the sun for two or three days. They are then kneaded into cylinders, like bottles, each an ell in

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enough food to support their aged parents. "But sometimes," he adds, "even if there was food enough, and if people, especially women, who had cattle of their own, gave suspicion that they secretly did mischief by practising witchcraft, they were left to die from starvation" (*Tsuni-//Goam*, 86, 74).

14:Hahn L-5 (ca. 1870-1880) 1881 FX13 Hottentot FX13



171 a Lindwurm's (*i.e.*, a dragon's) trail was to be seen, now a brook is winding. Beowulf kills the dragon who lives in the lake. Acheloos, the River-god, became a serpent when Hercules fought for Deïaneira. Siegfried kills the dragon in the cavern on the Rhine: and many more instances too numerous to mention. (See on this subject, Schwartz, "Ursprung der Mythologie," Berlin, 1860, especially pp. 58, 59, &c.; Peschel, "Races of Man," p. 252; "On Serpent Worship," Lubbock, "Origin of Civilization," pp. 186, &c.; Müller, "Americanische Urreligionen.")

825 So much as to the Serpent and Fountain superstition among the Khoikhoi. I have eagerly searched, but in vain, for indications of a serpent worship among the Namaquas, as we find among the Kafir tribes, especially the Ama-Zulu. What I heard and saw with my own eyes amongst the natives may here find place at once.

825 754 Not so many years ago a sorcerer died. When he felt his end approaching, he whistled, and all at once snakes of all sizes and of all descriptions came and assembled round their master, and crept over him, so that the eye-witness from whom I have this, and other people who were in the hut, cleared out as fast as their feet could carry them. The same person told me that he had a dispute once with that sorcerer about the power he exercised over the snakes, when the man told him that, if he doubted his witchcraft, he would call as many snakes as he wished to see. Upon which he whistled, and snakes of every kind approached from all directions, and the sorcerer took them from the ground and put them round his neck.

825 In January, 1872, I was on the mission station Warm Bath (or Nisbet Bath), in Great Namaqualand. I offered payment to the value of three and four shillings for large snakes, especially for very poisonous animals. No sooner was this known than a young fellow, of about twenty-two years of age, came to me and said he would bring as many as I liked, but he wished a goat for each pair. I agreed, and after some hours he returned with a pair of

14:Hahn L-5 (ca. 1870-1880) 1881 FX13 Hottentot FX13



776 vultures and hyenas, they are also considered !gauna
775 !ōra. A man who is killed as a criminal, or who is
761 slain according to the rules of the vendetta, or a slave
766 killed by the master, or enemies killed in the battle—all are left to the animals of the desert to be feasted upon, *so that they will be entirely annihilated*, they are also considered !gauna !ora khoin.

838 There is also a cruel custom among the Khoikhoi, of which I have convinced myself—that is, to leave elderly people to their fate; some food and water is left with them, and the younger folks remove to another spot. Inquiring into the reason of this so repulsive practice, I was told that it sometimes was done by very poor people, who had not food enough to support the aged parents. But sometimes, even if there was food enough, and if people, especially women, who had cattle and milk-cows of
[754] their own, gave suspicion that they were under the influence of !Gaunab, and did secretly mischief by practising witchcraft, they were left to die from starvation. The people, awe-stricken, were almost compelled to fly from them.

776 It is, therefore, not strange that !Gaunab, the evil-spirit, is also invoked. They promised him offerings so as not to provoke his anger, as is the case among the ǂAuni-Nama, in the Walefish Bay territory. I am almost certain that, before the Khoikhoi-tribes separated, this bad Being, !Gaunab, was generally worshipped, and is of much older date than Tsūi!goab and Heitsi-eibib. It
[171] is strange that the !Gabe-Bushmen, the !Ai-Bushmen, the !Nunin, and especially among these the Heiǂguin (or wooden noses), all know !Gauna, whom they fear as an evil-doer, while we find no trace of the name Tsūi!goab or Heitsi-eibib. For these reasons I am of opinion that the !Gauna was an evil demon, known already to the primitive Hottentot race, before there was a distinction between Sān and Khoikhoin. Tsūi!goab, however, was a secondary Being, the national God of the Khoikhoi branch.